
**Health Care & Wellness
Committee**

SB 6223

Brief Description: Authorizing emergency medical technicians to administer glucagon in emergency situations.

Sponsors: Senators Keiser, Pflug, Parlette, Kohl-Welles and Franklin.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires ambulance and aid vehicles to make glucagon emergency kits available to emergency medical technicians.
- Authorizes emergency medical technicians to administer glucagon.

Hearing Date: 2/20/08

Staff: Chris Blake (786-7392).

Background:

Diabetes and Glucagon

Diabetes is a disease where blood sugar levels are elevated due to the pancreas' inability to make or properly use insulin. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimate that over 20 million people in the United States have diabetes.

Hypoglycemia is a condition that occurs when blood sugar levels become too low. For individuals with diabetes, hypoglycemia may occur when attempts to manage blood sugar levels through diet, exercise, or medications are not successful. One method for raising blood sugar levels in hypoglycemic patients is to inject a medication known as glucagon which is a hormone that helps to quickly raise blood sugar levels.

Emergency Medical Personnel

Emergency medical personnel may provide patient care that is included within training curricula, approved specialized training, and local medical program director protocols. The four categories

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of emergency medical service personnel in descending order of training are: paramedics, intermediate life support technicians, emergency medical technicians, and first responders. To become an emergency medical technician an individual must complete an approved training course and an examination and also be an active member of an emergency medical services organization. With the exception of the administration of epinephrine, an emergency medical technician may not administer injections.

Summary of Bill:

Ambulance and aid services must make glucagon emergency kits available to their emergency medical technicians. Emergency medical technicians, but not first responders, are authorized to administer glucagon.

Legislative findings are made regarding the problem of hypoglycemia among individuals with diabetes and the ability of glucagon to treat severe hypoglycemia.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available from the Department of Health and requested from Local Government on February 18, 2008.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.